



TRICARE NORTHWEST

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62nd MG's Dinh has Rx for AF Pharmacist of the Year

Master Sgt. Rick Burnham, 62nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

She has been called a visionary, a stellar leader, and a brilliant clinician. Her work has been termed groundbreaking, dollar-saving, and life-preserving. She has implemented, integrated and established. She's dual-hatted.

Yet, ask the co-workers of 1st Lt. Tam Dinh, winner of the Air Force's Company Grade Pharmacist of the Year Award, why she's No. 1, and they speak of "people skills," her good sense of humor, and an uncanny ability to put people at ease. "She has the ability to work within the healthcare community and get what's best for the patients," said Capt. Kevin Wright, commander of the Diagnostic/Therapeutic Flight, which includes pharmacy services. "Her first priority is making sure the customer/patient is taken care of."

When notified of the award in April, Dinh credited the pharmacy staff, "Teamwork is the key here, everything we do is made possible by it," said the lieutenant, who is a licensed pharmacist in three states. "The pharmacists have to have the support of the technicians to be able to properly manage the office. Without the hard

work of the technicians, the pharmacists would have to spend time on the counter, instead of behind the scenes taking care of the day-to-day operation of the office."

Dinh's award nomination package is impressive. For example, her drug class review program – called "genius" by medical group officials – saved \$18,000 the first time it was used. The program used "pharmacoeconomic" concepts in drug selection to optimize therapy for medical group patients.

Dinh, whose parents moved from Vietnam to New York when she was eight, is also credited with the pharmacy's .005 percent error rate, unheard of in medical circles, said Wright. She led a Tiger Team in the workflow analysis of the pharmacy dispensing process, resulting in an increase of the flight's usable shelf space by 15 percent, saving more than \$2,000 in the process. In addition, she coordinated a \$14 million pharmacy design project, a proposal medical group officials called "bulletproof." That project reportedly saved the Air Force \$12,000 in narcotic storage costs alone.

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Inside this issue:

62d MG Pharmacist of the Year	1
NHOH Implements PCMBN	1,3
Everetts Men's Health Conference	2,3
New 92MG Appt System will Reduce Waits	4
Army Pharmacy Junior Enlisted Technician Awarded to MAMC	4



Team Assignments Won't Change as NHOH Implements PCMBN

Jeff Trowbridge, NHOH Managed Care

Beginning this summer, Navy families enrolled in TRICARE Prime and active duty sailors and marines assigned to the Naval Air Station, Whidbey Island

will be assigned to a specific health care provider at the Naval Hospital, Oak Harbor. This provider will coordinate all their health care needs, serving as the enrollees'

Primary Care Manager (PCM). A PCM is a physician or other privileged medical professional that serves as the patient's first contact with TRICARE. This

individualized approach will serve to cement the relationship between the patient and their PCM and will ensure continuity of care while allow-

(Continued on page 3)



GuyCare: Men's Health Focus of Upcoming Everett Conference

Colleen McElroy RN, C, MS, Health Promotion Coordinator, Branch Medical Clinic, Everett

In an effort to help increase awareness about men's health issues at Naval Station Everett, Commanding Officer, Captain Kim Buike, is lending his full support to an upcoming event being planned for National Men's Health Week. "Take Charge of Your Health" is the theme for the Men's Health Conference being held from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. June 13 in the Grand Vista Ballroom on the base.

The conference will address a number of men's health issues including, prostate and testicular cancer survival, Pre-Menstrual Syndrome (A Guy's Perspective), emotional health, sexuality and impotence, relationships, sports injury prevention, information for new fathers, substance abuse, heart disease prevention and more. Naval Hospital Bremerton, Branch Medical Clinic, Everett, Naval Station Everett, Providence Everett Medical Center, Northwest Hospital, Compass Health, the Everett Clinic, the American Cancer Society, and the Lance Armstrong Foundation are co-sponsors of the event.

The National Men's Health Foundation is working to raise national awareness among the general public and especially among men, of the importance of preventive health behavior in the early detection and treatment of health problems affecting men. National Men's Health Week is June 12-18, the week leading up to and including Father's Day, the time of year men receive the greatest attention in our society.

Each year, thousands of men and their families face health problems that are often life threatening. According to Tammy Van Fleet, National Men's

Health Foundation staff, whether it's a serious medical problem such as prostate cancer or simply failing to have regular medical check-ups, many men are unaware of the importance of preventive health in maintaining a long and happy life.

Hospitals all over the country are opening women's health centers, offering breast and pelvic exams, bone density tests, blood and urine tests and counseling on nutrition, weight, stress management, mental health and exercise. According to Jane Brody, writer for the New York Times, there's a reason these centers cater to women. Multiple surveys have shown that women pay more attention to their physical and emotional wellbeing and are more likely than men to take steps to protect their health and check out early signs of possible disease.

Attitude differences in men and women account for a great deal of the health disparity between genders. Jean Bonhomme, MD, MPH, and president of the National Black Men's Health Network states, "When a boy at age 8 scrapes his knee, he's told 'big boys don't cry.' What's going to happen when that boy is 50 years old and having chest pain?" There

are many explanations for the fact that women on average live about seven years longer than men do. According to Jane Brody not the least of them is that many men fail to take the necessary steps to prevent life-threatening diseases and get treatment while they can still be readily reversed or cured without budget-blowing therapies.

According to the Foundation, men need to be en-

(Continued on page 3)



Chris Brewer, testicular cancer survivor, web-master for the Lance Armstrong Foundation and competitive cyclist, joined 150 fellow cyclists from the Peloton Project in the Race for the Roses in Austin, Texas last May. The group raised \$3,500 for the Lance Armstrong Foundation to help fight TC. Brewer will be keynote speaker at the Men's Health Conference at Naval Station Everett, June 13.



GuyCare: Men's Health Focus of Upcoming Everett Conference Cont.

(Continued from page 2)

couraged to take as active a role as women do in regularly visiting their physician for basic treatment and examinations. The rate of male mortality and morbidity could significantly be reduced if we could encourage men to seek treatment before symptoms have reached a critical stage. The 1998 Department of Defense Survey of Health Related Behaviors showed that less than half (48%) of all military men had ever received information or instruction on how to examine their testicles for lumps.

"Everywhere you look there is an abundance of women's health information, community classes and lectures for women, and health conferences being held across the country for women," Brody said. "Clearly men should be provided all of the information they need in order to be able to take charge of their own health. The first step will be to convince men, intellectually and emotionally, of the value of preventive health practices. The next step will be to overcome what seems like a gender-specific resistance to paying attention to health and acting promptly and appropriately at the first inkling of a problem. Men tend to ignore noticeable signals,

thinking that they will go away with rest or time or that it is more manly to suffer in silence. Only when signals progress into a health crises that can no longer be ignored are they likely to seek medical help."

The National Men's Health Foundation has set up a toll free phone line (1-800-955-2002) and a web site (www.nmhw.org) where individuals can order a free men's maintenance manual, written by the editors of Men's Health Magazine and developed in cooperation with the American Academy of Family Physicians.

The conference is open to military members, retirees and the general public. Registration is recommended for the conference and is required for the lunch. To register call 1-800-554-6600 and press option 4 by June 6. For more information call Colleen McElroy, Health Promotion Coordinator at the Naval Hospital's Branch Medical Clinic, Everett, (425) 304-4062.

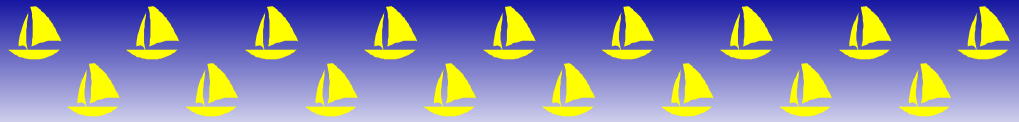
Team Assignments Won't Change as NHOH Implements PCMBN Cont.

(Continued from page 1)

ing for more prevention oriented continuous and coordinated health care services.

Currently the hospital's Prime Health Center (PHC) is configured around three primary care teams based on the sponsor's command or retiree's social security number. These team assignments will remain the same, but will be enhanced by specific assignment to one physician or a physician extender such as a physician's assistant or nurse practitioner.

Provider biographies and selection criteria will be distributed to current PHC enrollees this spring. Assignments will begin this summer and all current enrollees will receive written confirmation of their PCM (remember team assignments will not change) and procedures used to schedule appointments and for after-hours contact.



On Hold for Appts.? New 92MG System will Reduce Waits

A new telephone appointment system has been installed at the 92nd Medical Group (92 MDG) at Fairchild AFB and is ready to deliver better service to those needing appointments. TRICARE Flight administrator Capt. Bert Scott explained that the group staff waited a long time to see the replacement of the old (terribly old) system, but they were not waiting alone, "Many times, patients were on hold too long trying to get appointments!" he said. Various obstacles made acquisition and installation of the new \$100,000+ system a very long process. "Now that it's here, we thank our patients for their patience and hope to reduce waiting as much as possible" Scott added.

The new telephone appointment system (reached at 247-2361 or 1-800-523-2151 for appointments, information or pharmacy refill line) will allow the patients to select options to direct their calls to the right area of the clinic. "This option should assist our beneficiaries in reaching the right person on the first call," Scott explained. As the appointment clerks will not need to be involved in transferring these calls, they will have more

time to make appointments. Also, patients who need to make a routine or follow-up appointment with their Primary Care Manager can do so over the phone using an automated process. As more patients choose to use this option, patients with acute (same day) needs will be able to talk to a person more quickly and easily. Finally, the new system also offers flexibility in the number of appointment clerks who can answer calls. This flexibility is absolutely critical as the demand for appointments fluctuates drastically throughout each day or week.

The captain admits that the 92 MDG couldn't have done it alone. "We owe a great deal of thanks to the 92 Communications Squadron for their help in set-up and installation. We'd also like to thank the many people from around the base that participated in a "dry run" to test the system," said Scott. "We believe the first and most important contact with our patients will be greatly improved by this upgrade," he concluded.

Army Pharmacy Junior Enlisted Technician Awarded to MAMC Specialist

Wynona Bice-Stephens

Madigan pharmacy technician SPC Shane G. Robinson has been selected as recipient of the "Army Pharmacy Junior Enlisted Technician" Award for the year 2000. The award was presented at the Combined Forces Pharmacy Symposium recently held in Biloxi, Miss.

A native of Fort Worth, Texas, Robinson arrived at Madigan in 1998. Prior to enlisting in the Army, Robinson completed a Baccalaureate Degree in Fine Arts from Texas Tech University and was employed as an Art Director for a marketing and design firm in Dallas. His extensive background enabled him to quickly become a leader and resource for the Department of Pharmacy, where he became known as the "go to" person.

In the Outpatient Pharmacy, Robinson always extends assistance to patients and other staff members

alike, portraying excellent customer service skills. He was selected because of his exceptional management and medication skills to pilot a new refill program, which now allows the section to handle over 6,000 refills per week.

Robinson is solely responsible for all call-in refills in the Drive-Thru Pharmacy, and fills and monitors prescriptions submitted via the Internet. He also supervises the regional courier-based programs. Last year, he was selected as the Madigan Army Medical Center Military Pharmacy Technician of the year.

Robinson now plans to pursue a Master's Degree in Business Administration. He and his wife Alison are the parents of a one-year-old daughter, Jordan.